1;Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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tively whence the Abipones formerly came, I will at any rate tell you where they now inhabit. That vast extent of country bounded from north to south by the Rio Grande, or Iñate, and the territories of Sta. Fè, and from east to west by the shores of the Paraguay, and the country of St. Iago, is the residence of the Abipones, who are distributed into various hordes. Impatient of agriculture and a fixed home, they are continually moving from place to place. The opportunity of water and provisions at one time, and the necessity of avoiding the approach of the enemy at another, obliges them to be constantly on the move. The Abipones imitate skilful chess-players. After committing slaughter in the southern colonies of the Spaniards, they retire far northwards, afflict the city of Asumpcion with murders and rapine, and then hurry back again to the south. If they have acted hostilities against the towns of the Guaranies, or the city of Corrientes, they betake themselves to the west. But if the territories of St. Iago or Cordoba have been the objects of their fury, they cunningly conceal themselves in the marshes, islands, and reedy places of the river Parana. For the Spaniards, however desirous, are not able to return the injuries of the savages, from the difficulty of the

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CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE FOOD, JOURNEYS, AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF THE ECONOMY OF THE ABIPONES.

222 The wild Abipones live like wild beasts. They
224 neither sow nor reap, nor take any heed of
[241] agriculture. Taught by natural instinct, the
[82] instructions of their ancestors, and their own experience, they are acquainted with all the productions of the earth and the trees, at what part of the year they spontaneously grow, what animals are to be found in what places, and what arts are to be employed in taking them.
421 All things are in common with them. They have no proprietors, as with us, of lands, rivers, and groves, who possess the exclusive right of hunting, fishing, and gathering wood there. Whatever flies in the air, swims in the water, and grows wild in the woods, may become the property of the first person that chooses to take
[411 it. The Abipones are unacquainted with spades,
411 ploughs, and axes; the arrow, the spear, the
231] club, and horses, are the only instruments they make use of in procuring food, clothing, and
221 habitation. As all lands do not bear all things, and as various productions grow at various

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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times of the year, they cannot continue long in one situation. They remove from place to place, wherever they can most readily satisfy the demands of hunger and thirst. The plains abound in emus, and their numerous eggs, in deer, tigers, lions, various kinds of rabbits, and other small animals peculiar to America, and also in flocks of partridges. Numbers of stags, exactly like those of our country, frequent the banks of the larger rivers. Innumerable herds of wild boars are almost constantly to be seen in marshy places, which they delight in, in the neighbourhood of a wood. The groves, besides antas, and tamanduas, contain swarms of monkeys and parrots. The lakes and rivers, which abound in fish, produce water-wolves, water-dogs, capibaris, innumerable otters, and flocks of geese and ducks. I do not mention the great multitude of tortoises, as neither the Abipones nor Spaniards eat them in Paraguay. At stated times of the year, they collect quantities of young cormorants, on the banks of rivers, and reckon them amongst the delicacies of the table. Were none of these things to be procured, tree fruits and hives of excellent honey would never be wanting. The various species of palms alone will supply meat, drink, medicine, habitation, clothes, arms, and what not,

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acid more quickly. On the same account, the Indians and Paraguayrian Spaniards have their maize, which is intended for drink, chewed by old women; they will not intrust this office to the younger ones, who, they say, abound in bad humours. Could any person, aware of this circumstance, though of no very delicate stomach, swallow the beverage without nausea? Yet this filthy drink has more lovers amongst the Americans, than Helen had amongst the Greeks.

They always have many causes for celebrating a public drinking-party; the most frequent are, the gaining of a victory, an impending fight, funeral rites, festivities on the birth of a Cacique's son, the shaving of widowers or widows, the changing of a name, the proclamation of a lately appointed captain, the arrival of a guest of consideration, a wedding, and, what is most common, a council of war. If materials for preparing the liquor be at hand, occasion, and inclination for drinking, will never be wanting. As honey is always to be had, they are never, at any part of the year, in want of mead; but as it is seldom to be got in sufficient quantities, for the number of partakers, parties of this kind are generally of short duration. From December to April, when the woods abound with the ripe alfaroba, is the

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chief season for drinking. During these months they drink without pause or intermission. They join the night to the day, with scarce any interval for brief meals, or sleep: before they have slept themselves sober they stagger back to the party of drinkers. During all that time you scarce ever find them in possession of their senses; to live, with them, is to drink, and you would say that the more they drank the more thirsty they grew. To show that they do not tremble at the sight of blood, and that they take pleasure in wounds, they emulously prick their breast and arms, and not unfrequently their tongue, with crocodiles' bones, and the sharpest thorns. Disputes too are frequent among them concerning pre-eminence in valour, which produce confused clamours, fighting, wounds, and slaughter. "In that skirmish you basely turned your back on the enemy," one perhaps will say to the other; who, not choosing to endure the reproach, replies "What? What do you say?" till from words they proceed to blows, to arrows, and to spears, unless other persons interfere. It often happens that a contention between two implicates and incites them all, so that snatching up arms, and taking the part, some of one, some of the other, they furiously rush to attack and slay one another. This is no uncommon occurrence in drink-